JESUS’ AMAZING CLAIM

 “Recap Gospel of John” Power Point – a review of our study so far (from last year), Chapters 1 thru first part of Chapter 5

It is obvious that the Pharisees, “the Jews,” the Jewish religious leaders about Jesus did not have a very favorable opinion of Jesus. We see from our passage that they want him killed. Elsewhere in the Bible they accused Jesus of being a “blasphemer” (Matt 9:3), a “Samaritan” (John 8:48), demon possessed (John 8:48, 10:20), “insane” (John 10:20), being illegitimate (“born of fornication,” John 8:41), that He performs His amazing signs by the power of Satan (Matt 12:24). They had numerous negative opinions about Jesus but the bottom line is they did not believe that He was the Messiah, the Son of God. They believed that He really was a blasphemer and they wanted Him dead.

Jesus spends the next 30 verses, from verse 19 to the end of Chapter 5 responding to the hostility the Pharisees felt toward Him, specifically in John 5 for (a) breaking the Sabbath and (b) claiming to be equal with God. How does Jesus respond to them? You might expect that Jesus would defend His actions of healing the lame man on the Sabbath and that He would explain to the Pharisees why what He did wasn’t a sin. He doesn’t. You might expect that if the Pharisees misunderstood Jesus’ words and that He really wasn’t claiming to be equal with God that He would have backtracked and tried to clarify matters. “Gentlemen, apparently there has been some sort of misunderstanding…” He doesn’t. Instead Jesus spends the next 30 verses pouring gasoline on their fiery rage. He reinforces His claim to be God.

Let’s read the first part of Jesus’ response to the Pharisees… READ John 5:19-24

What is Jesus saying? Is there any backtracking or back-peddling on His claim to be equal with God the Father? Absolutely not! He is clearly claiming to be equal with God. Jesus’ response here in John Chapter 5 in effect draws a line in the sand. On one side Jesus’ claim to be the Son of God, the Messiah, equal with God is true and you believe what He says and you follow Him (like His disciples). On the other side is the belief that Jesus is either delusional, demon-possessed, crazy or in fact a dangerous blasphemer who is misleading the people (like the Pharisees). There is no option for Jesus to be merely a good moral teacher. How can He be a good teacher if what He teaches is not true? There is no straddling the line on this issue. Either you are on the side that believes Jesus is the Son of God or on the side that believes He was just a man. There really is no other option.

In the verses I just read Jesus claims equality with God. Now it began back in verse 17 when He referred to God as “My Father.” God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit all share the same nature, the same essence. They are One Triune God. And since Jesus is the only begotten Son of God, He is by His nature equal with the Father. He’s God. That’s a big deal. This is an amazing claim.

In verse 19 He says, “the Son can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the Father doing. For whatever the Father does, that the Son does likewise.” Here He talks about the Son in the third person but as we read on we realize that He is talking about Himself. He is the Son. And clearly that’s what the Jews were hearing too. In essence Jesus is saying this: “I do not operate independently of My Father in what I say or what I do.” Later on in John 8 Jesus will say, “I do nothing on my own authority, but speak just as the Father taught Me. And He who sent Me is with Me. He has not left Me alone, for I always do the things that are pleasing to Him” In John 14 He will say, “But I do as the Father has commanded Me, so that the world may know that I love the Father.” Jesus only does and says what God, His Father wants Him to do and say. He is completely submissive to His Father’s will for the purpose of accomplishing God’s mission to redeem fallen humanity.

While Jesus walked this earth (33 years) was He both fully God and fully man? Colossians 2:9 says “For in Him (in Jesus) the whole fullness of Deity dwells bodily.” The NASB says, “dwells in bodily form.” So Jesus is equal to God, right? Well, there are those out there who will argue that Jesus was not fully God and they will use, for example, Matthew 24:36 when Jesus tells His disciples, “But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone.” And they will say, “See, Jesus was not omniscient like we know God is!” How do you resolve that?

Explanation: Jesus restricted the use of His divine attributes while he was in human form in submission to the Father. But that voluntary restriction does not diminish who Jesus was in His essence.

In verse 21 we see that Jesus is equal to God in power. Who is it that would raise Jesus from the dead? The Father. Who is it that would raise Lazarus from the dead? Jesus said, “the Son gives life to whom he will.” Clearly He will raise the dead and give physical life, but we know from John 3 and John 4 that Jesus also is the source of spiritual life, eternal life.

In verse 22 we see that Jesus is equal to God in authority. “For the Father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the Son.” Jesus is the Judge.

In verse 23 we see that Jesus is equal to God in honor. “That all may honor the Son, just as they honor the Father.” But the reverse is true also, and that is if you don’t honor the Son then you are not honoring the Father “who sent Him.”

In verse 24 we see that Jesus is equal to God in truth. Jesus’ words, His message, is from God. His words are the Father’s words. Hebrews 1:2 says that “in these last days [God, the Father] has spoken to us by His Son, whom He appointed the heir of all things, through whom also He created the world.”

And Jesus is just getting started. He has much more to say to His detractors, but we will look closer at that next week.

OK, then, in conclusion those who read the Gospel of John, they jury if you will, only have 3 options regarding Jesus

1. Jesus is stating the truth. He IS equal with God
2. Jesus claim is false and He knows it. That makes Him a blasphemer and a deceiver.
3. Jesus claim is false and He doesn’t know it. He’s deranged, He’s crazy.

 So, application, who do YOU say that Jesus is? How does that impact your life? Who are you going to share this with?

 Time to sing – our hymn for this morning is “Fairest Lord Jesus,” first and last verses.